SUPERIOR ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Ethics Policy

PURPOSE

- This ethics policy is intended to create a workplace of integrity, openness and trust through the participation of all doctors and employees of Superior Animal Hospital.

- Our Mission at Superior Animal Hospital and Boarding Suites is to provide clients and their pets with the opportunity to receive high quality, progressive and compassionate services. We strive to deliver excellent care and client education through all stages of pet’s lives while recognizing the importance of the family pet bond.

- Our Vision at Superior Animal Hospital and Boarding Suites is to be regionally recognized for our commitment to our community by delivering the highest quality veterinary and boarding services in a compassionate environment, while providing the most positive and rewarding work atmosphere.

- As veterinarians, we are obligated to uphold the following oath:

  Being admitted to the profession of veterinary medicine, I solemnly swear to use my scientific knowledge and skills for the benefit of society through the protection of animal health, the relief of animal suffering, the conservation of animal resources, the promotion of public health, and the advancement of medical knowledge.

  I will practice my profession conscientiously, with dignity, and in keeping with the principles of veterinary medical ethics.

  I accept as a lifelong obligation, the continual improvement of my professional knowledge and competence.
• Superior Animal Hospital is a certified by the American Animal Hospital Association and therefore is held to their standards in addition to this ethics policy.

• As a veterinary medical facility, we understand we have a responsibility to ensure our success by promoting and practicing the following values. How we want to be viewed and practice medicine are reflected by these values as seen by others.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

All veterinarians employed by Superior Animal Hospital are expected to adhere to the Principles of Veterinary Medical Ethics. As veterinarians, we shall conduct our personal and professional affairs in an ethical manner and abide by the following principles:

• We should not slander other veterinarians in a misleading or false manner or injure their reputation or professional standing.

• As veterinarians, we must strive to remain current in our knowledge and skills through appropriate continuing education and professional development.

• We should be proactive in our communities when it comes to the safety and security of public health.

• We are to protect the confidentiality and respect the privacy of our clients and patients.

• We are to seek qualified help should we become dependant on or impaired by alcohol or other substances.

• As veterinarians, it is our responsibility to always first consider the needs of our patients. We have each taken an oath to relieve disease and suffering while minimizing pain.

• As veterinarians employed by Superior Animal Hospital, we shall practice veterinary medicine according to the laws and statues of the state of Wisconsin.
• We will always be fair and honest in our relations with staff and clients and never take part in misrepresentations, deceit or fraud.

• Veterinarians at Superior Animal Hospital have the right to choose whom we will serve. The client and the veterinarian may both decline or accept the Veterinarian-Client relationship; clients may also decide to accept or decline treatment based on related costs after appropriate discussion of clinical findings, diagnostic techniques, likely outcome of treatment and ability of payment.

• Veterinarians may not neglect their patient once they have begun patient care according to any previously agreed treatment. Clients should be updated on a regular basis as to the status and cost of treatment while the patient is under our care. If the client declines further care for any reason, including lack of ability for payment of fees, the veterinarian patient-client relationship may be terminated by either party.

• In emergency situations, as veterinarians employed at Superior Animal Hospital, we shall provide essential services for animals to relieve suffering or deliver minimal life saving services. Such care may be to stabilize the patient until an owner is contacted or possibly euthanasia the animal to relieve suffering as determined by the veterinarian.

• As veterinarians, we are responsible for the interests of the client and patient, including all decisions affecting care, diagnosis and treatment of the patient.

**VETERINARIAN-CLIENT PATIENT RELATIONSHIP**
A veterinarian-client patient relationship is the basis for interaction between the clients, patients and veterinarian regarding the need for medical treatment.

As veterinarians, we are responsible for the maintenance and confidentiality of all medical records.

A veterinarian-client patient relationship is necessary for dispensing prescription medications under federal law. It is considered unethical and illegal to prescribe or dispense medications without a proper relationship.

The veterinarian-client patient relationship may be terminated under certain conditions in an ethical and professional manner; this may be done by the veterinarian or client at any time. The patient may be referred to the owner’s veterinarian of choice and medical records transferred.

When a client goes to another veterinarian, the veterinarian-client patient relationship then transfers to the new attending veterinarian.

**GENETIC DEFECTS**

As veterinarians working at Superior Animal Hospital, we believe it is unethical to surgically repair genetic defects in animals intended to be used for breeding, showing, racing or in field trials. Owners should be encouraged to neuter these animals to prevent passing on unwanted genetic diseases and medical problems.

**MEDICAL RECORDS**

All veterinarians must maintain medical records that comply with AAHA requirements, in addition to state and federal law.
• All medical records remain property of Superior Animal Hospital and will be retained as required by state statutes.

• Client-patient information contained in the medical records is considered confidential and cannot be released without the permission of the owner or a court order.

• Clients shall receive copies of their records upon request in a reasonable time frame.

FEES

• The quality of service rendered by the veterinarian should be maintained at the highest quality at all times and is not dependant on the fees charged.

VETERINARY STAFF

• All veterinary staff employed by Superior Animal Hospital must convey and create a workplace based on the following values:

  o Integrity and Knowledge
  o Excellence
  o Dedication
  o Empathy and Compassion
  o Our Mission and Vision

• Superior Animal Hospital employees will treat co-workers fairly, have mutual respect, promote a team environment and avoid the intent or appearance of unethical or compromising practices including harassment or discrimination.
ETHICS VIOLATIONS

Reporting and Discovery:

- All employees are expected to report any inappropriate practices or actions they believe unethical to whom they feel most comfortable. This may be your immediate supervisor, the Director of Veterinary Services, another veterinarian, the Director of Operations, the Director of Boarding Suites or the Owner.

- Any reports of possible violations will be treated in a confidential manner.

Investigating and Information Collection:

- All reports will be investigated to the best of our ability in a fair and professional manner. All parties involved will be questioned by at least one superior having disciplinary power.

Resolution:

- Superior Animal Hospital will not tolerate any infractions of this code and will take appropriate measures to act quickly in correcting any issues.

Penalties:

- Any employee found to have violated any portion of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment if appropriate.

Appeals:

- If you feel you have been wrongly or inappropriately found to have broken a part of this code of ethics, you may request final determination of any guilt or disciplinary action to be by the Owner.
Overall, I learned that being in the business of veterinary medicine, our employee handbook is lacking a very important, if not the most important policy, an ethics policy. This is a policy that basically covers the core of what we believe and have taken an oath to uphold as veterinarians.